

amount, the percentage being different for each combination as an inverse proportion to the chances of obtaining the combination.

The prize awarded for possession of the magic card can be a small fixed amount and can be won by all participants having a picked card termed the magic card. In poker, a player has five cards and the odds of having one of 52 cards is about 1:10. For poker players, the prize may be small, such as 4 tokens. This prize could be paid, or simply be given as a credit to the player's position for future participation. In twenty-one, most players will take only a few cards, so the odds of having the magic card without busting are smaller. For twenty-one players, the prize could be 12 tokens. Again the prize could be paid or taken in credits, and the prize amount could be increased (e.g. doubled) if the winning player is also indicated as being randomly chosen.

The invention also allows for more interesting versions of the random bonus prize determination. For instance, the master controller can select a table at random in the casino to be a grand prize winner. The selected table could announce to participants after accepting tokens for the game that the magic card bonus prize value is significantly larger, namely ten times greater. Alternatively, the master controller could simply instruct the table controller 10 of the selected table to pick at random one of its participants for the purposes of awarding a bonus prize without any requirement of possession of a given card.

The random card picker 28 at each table can also be used to pick out two cards at random from the virtual deck as being the magic cards. Possession of two cards involves much lower odds, and the pay back for the two card combination can be significant, e.g. 20 tokens in the case of poker. The random card combination can also be one of a set of card combinations having a medium scoring value, e.g. a red or black pair of any rank, a pair of rank ten or greater, and three of a kind. The value of the prize awarded can take into consideration the odds of having the particular combination of cards selected.

As can be appreciated, the prize amount could be determined by a total of a portion of player contributions less any winnings paid out, i.e. a progressive jackpot. The prize amount for the possession of a randomly picked card or for being seated at a randomly chosen player position could be randomly chosen, while a progressive jackpot is maintained for the auxiliary prize awarded for obtaining the predetermined high ranking combination of cards. In such an arrangement, the random prize amounts paid out may be deducted from the progressive jackpot. Alternatively, the random prize selection may randomly select a percentage of the jackpot to be awarded, either for the predetermined high ranking combinations of cards or for the magic card, the percentage awarded for the magic card being substantially less than for a high ranking hand (e.g. 1-5%).

As can be appreciated, the invention could also comprise for each player position a player participation control device which includes a display for showing a number of prepaid participations (a monetary amount) and input keys, namely for example, a key to participate in the current auxiliary

game and deduct a credit from the amount displayed, a key to hold a player's credits while no participation takes place (the player may take a washroom break), a key to increase (e.g. double) a player's participation in the auxiliary game with a corresponding increase in pay back, and a key to gamble the player's auxiliary prize winnings (e.g. at least small winnings) at even odds (e.g. double or nothing with a 50% chance of doubling). The state of the control device can be indicated by LEDs or other indicator means, so that it is clear whether the player is participating, participating with an increased participation, or holding. The keys could be integrated into the token acceptor unit 14 mounted onto the gaming table.

We claim:

1. A method of playing a wagering game comprising the following steps:

- (A) a player placing a prize wager,
- (B) playing an underlying game, the underlying game being capable of producing a predetermined event,
- (C) if the predetermined event occurs during the underlying game, then randomly selecting a prize from a predetermined set of prizes, and
- (D) awarding the prize to the player, whereby the underlying game may be enhanced by providing an opportunity for the player to win a randomly selected prize in the playing of the underlying game.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the underlying game is a card game.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the underlying game is blackjack.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the predetermined event is a blackjack hand being dealt.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the predetermined event is the player receiving the blackjack hand.

6. An apparatus for use with a wagering game, the game being capable of producing a predetermined event, the apparatus comprising:

- (A) random selection means for randomly selecting a prize from among a set of predetermined prizes,
- (B) activation means for activating said random selection means when the predetermined event occurs, and
- (C) display means for displaying the randomly selected prize, whereby the game is enhanced by allowing a player to win the randomly selected prize during the play of the wagering game.

7. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said random selection means comprises a computer.

8. The apparatus of claim 7 further comprising sensing means for sensing wagers made by the player, whereby said computer may record and monitor wagers made by the player.

9. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said display means is an electric sign.

10. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein said activation means is an electric switch, whereby said electric switch transmits a signal to said computer.

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11. A method of playing a live card wagering game comprising the following steps:
 (A) a player placing a prize wager,
 (B) playing an underlying live card game, the underlying live card game capable of producing a predetermined event,
 (C) if the predetermined event occurs during the underlying live card game, then randomly selecting a prize from a predetermined set of prizes, and
 (D) awarding the prize to the player, whereby the underlying live card game may be enhanced by providing an opportunity for the player to win a randomly selected prize in the playing of the underlying live card game.
12. The method of claim 11, wherein the underlying live card game is blackjack.
13. The method of claim 12 wherein the predetermined event is a blackjack hand being dealt.
14. The method of claim 13 wherein the predetermined event is the player receiving the blackjack hand.
15. The method of claim 11 wherein the prize is a monetary sum.
16. The method of claim 11 wherein the prize is a good or service.
17. An apparatus for use with a live card wagering game, the live card game being capable of producing a predetermined event, the apparatus comprising:
 (A) random selection means for randomly selecting a prize from among a predetermined set of prizes,
 (B) activation means for activating said random selection means when the predetermined event occurs, and
 (C) display means for displaying the randomly selected prize, whereby the live card game is enhanced by allowing a player to win the randomly selected prize during the playing of the live card game.
18. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said random selection means comprises a computer.
19. The apparatus of claim 18 wherein said computer comprises:
 (A) random number generating means for generating a random number and
 (B) memory means for storing a predetermined pay table, whereby said computer may generate a random number and select a prize by comparing the random number to the pay table.
20. The apparatus of claim 18 further comprising sensing means for sensing wagers made by the player, whereby said computer may record and monitor wagers made by the player.

21. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said display means is an electric sign.
22. The apparatus of claim 18 wherein said activation means is an electric switch, whereby said electric switch transmits a signal to said computer.
23. A method of playing a live card wagering game comprising the following steps:
 (A) giving a player an option to place a prize wager,
 (B) playing an underlying live card game, the underlying live card game being capable of producing a predetermined event,
 (C) if the predetermined event occurs and the player placed a wager on the prize wager, generating a random number,
 (D) selecting a prize from a predetermined pay table by comparing the random number to the pay table, the pay table having a set of predetermined prizes corresponding to a range of possible random numbers, and
 (E) awarding the prize to the player, whereby the underlying live card game may be enhanced by allowing the player to win a randomly selected prize in the playing of the underlying live card game.
24. The method of claim 23 wherein generating a random number comprises the following steps:
 (A) producing random numbers consecutively in a continuous manner and
 (B) recording one random number when the predetermined event occurs, whereby the recorded random number is used in selecting the prize.
25. A method of playing a live card game comprising the following steps:
 (A) a player placing a prize wager;
 (B) playing an underlying live card game, the underlying live card game being capable of producing a predetermined event;
 (C) if the predetermined event occurs during the underlying live card game, then randomly selecting a prize from a predetermined pay table of distinct prizes; and
 (D) awarding the prize to the player; whereby the underlying live card game may be enhanced by providing an opportunity for the player to win a randomly selected prize in the playing of the underlying live card game.
26. The method of claim 25, wherein the underlying live card game comprises blackjack.
27. The method of claim 26 wherein the predetermined event comprises a blackjack hand being dealt.
28. The method of claim 27 wherein the predetermined event comprises the player receiving the blackjack hand.
29. The method of claim 25 wherein the underlying game comprises an electronic game.

30. The method of claim 25 wherein the prize comprises a monetary sum.
31. The method of claim 25 wherein the prize comprises a good or service.
32. An apparatus for use with a live card game, the live card game being capable of producing a predetermined event, the apparatus comprising:
 (A) random selection means for randomly selecting a prize from among a predetermined pay table of distinct bonus prizes;
 (B) activation means for activating said random selection means when the predetermined event occurs; and
 (C) display means for displaying the randomly selected bonus prize, whereby the live card game is enhanced by allowing a player to win the randomly selected bonus prize during the playing of the live card game.
33. The apparatus of claim 32 wherein the random selection device comprises a computer.
34. The apparatus of claim 33 wherein the computer comprises:
 (A) a random number generating means for generating a random number; and
 (B) a system for accessing a predetermined pay table, whereby the computer may generate a random number and select a prize by comparing the random number to the pay table.
35. The apparatus of claim 33 further comprising a sensing device adapted to sense wagers made by the player, whereby the computer may record and monitor wagers made by the player.
36. The apparatus of claim 32 wherein the display device is an electric display.
37. The apparatus of claim 33 wherein the activation device is an electric switch whereby the electric switch transmits a signal to said computer.
38. A method of playing a live card game comprising the following steps:
 (A) giving a player an option to place a prize wager;
 (B) playing an underlying live card game, the underlying live card game being capable of producing a predetermined event; and
 (C) if the predetermined event occurs and the player placed the prize wager, then:
 (a) recording a random number;
 (b) selecting a prize from a predetermined pay table by comparing the random number to the pay table, the pay table having a list of predetermined distinct prizes corresponding to a range of possible random numbers; and
 (c) awarding the prize to the player, whereby the underlying live card game may be enhanced by allowing
- the player to win a randomly selected prize in the playing of the underlying live card game.
39. The method of claim 38 wherein generating a random number comprises the following steps:
 (A) producing random numbers consecutively in a continuous manner; and
 (B) recording one random number when the predetermined event occurs, whereby the recorded random number is used in selecting the prize.
40. The method of claim 38 wherein a value of the prize is independent of a probability of occurrence of the predefined event.
41. The method of claim 38, wherein a value of the prize is independent of success in the underlying game.
42. A method of playing a live game comprising :
 (A) a player placing a prize wager,
 (B) playing an underlying live game, the underlying live game capable of producing a predetermined event,
 (C) if the predetermined event occurs during the underlying live game, then randomly selecting a prize from a predetermined set of prizes, and
 (D) awarding the prize to the player, whereby the underlying live game may be enhanced by providing an opportunity for the player to win a randomly selected prize in the playing of the underlying live game.
43. The method of claim 42, wherein the underlying live game is blackjack.
44. The method of claim 43 wherein the predetermined event is a blackjack hand being dealt.
45. The method of claim 44 wherein the predetermined event is the player receiving the blackjack hand.
46. The method of claim 42 wherein the prize is a monetary sum.
47. The method of claim 42 wherein the prize is at least one of a good and service.
48. An apparatus for use with a live game, the live game being capable of producing a predetermined event, the apparatus comprising:
 (A) a random selector for randomly selecting a prize from among a predetermined set of prizes,
 (B) an activator for activating said random selector when the predetermined event occurs, and
 (C) a display for displaying the randomly selected prize, whereby the live game is enhanced by allowing a player to win the randomly selected prize during the playing of the live game.
49. The apparatus of claim 48 wherein said random selector comprises a computer.

50. The apparatus of claim 49 wherein said computer comprises:
 (A) a random number generator for generating a random number and
 5 (B) a memory for storing a predetermined pay table, whereby said computer may generate a random number and select a prize by comparing the random number to the pay table.
- 10 51. The apparatus of claim 49 further comprising a sensor for sensing wagers made by the player, whereby said computer may record and monitor wagers made by the player.
- 15 52. The apparatus of claim 48 wherein said display is an electric sign.
53. The apparatus of claim 49 wherein said activator is an electric switch, whereby said electric switch transmits
 20 a signal to said computer.
54. A method of playing a live game comprising:
 (A) giving a player an option to place a prize wager,
 (B) playing an underlying live game, the underlying live
 25 game being capable of producing a predetermined event,
 (C) if the predetermined event occurs and the player placed a wager on the prize wager, generating a random number,
 (D) selecting a prize from a predetermined pay table by
 30 comparing the random number to the pay table, the pay table having a set of predetermined prizes corresponding to a range of possible random numbers, and
 (E) awarding the prize to the player, whereby the
 underlying live game may be enhanced by allowing the
 35 player to win a randomly selected prize in the playing of the underlying live game.
55. The method of claim 54 wherein generating a random number comprises the following steps:
 40 (A) producing random numbers consecutively in a continuous manner and
 (B) recording one random number when the predetermined event occurs, whereby the recorded random number is used in selecting the prize.
- 45 56. A method of playing a live game comprising the following steps:
 (A) a player placing a prize wager;
 (B) playing an underlying live game, the underlying live
 50 game being capable of producing a predetermined event;
 (C) if the predetermined event occurs during the underlying live game, then randomly selecting a prize from a predetermined pay table of distinct prizes; and
 (D) awarding the prize to the player; whereby the
 55 underlying live game may be enhanced by providing an opportunity for the player to win a randomly selected prize in the playing of the underlying live game.
- 60 57. The method of claim 56, wherein the underlying live game comprises blackjack.

58. The method of claim 57 wherein the predetermined event comprises a blackjack hand being dealt.
- 65 59. The method of claim 58 wherein the predetermined event comprises the player receiving the blackjack hand.
60. The method of claim 56 wherein the underlying game comprises an electronic game.
- 70 61. The method of claim 56 wherein the prize comprises a monetary sum.
62. The method of claim 56 wherein the prize comprises a good or service.
63. An apparatus for use with a live game, the live game being capable of producing a predetermined event, the apparatus comprising:
 (A) a random selector for randomly selecting a prize
 from among a predetermined pay table of distinct bonus
 prizes;
 (B) an activator for activating said random selector when
 the predetermined event occurs; and
 (C) a display for displaying the randomly selected bonus
 prize, whereby the live game is enhanced by allowing a
 player to win the randomly selected bonus prize during
 the playing of the live game.
- 80 64. The apparatus of claim 63 wherein the random selector comprises a computer.
65. The apparatus of claim 64 wherein the computer comprises:
 (A) a random number generator for generating a random
 number; and
 (B) a system for accessing a predetermined pay table,
 whereby the computer may generate a random number
 and select a prize by comparing the random number to
 the pay table.
- 90 66. The apparatus of claim 64 further comprising a sensor adapted to sense wagers made by the player, whereby the computer may record and monitor wagers made by the player.
- 105 67. The apparatus of claim 63 wherein the display is an electric display.
68. The apparatus of claim 64 wherein the activator is an electric switch whereby the electric switch transmits a signal to said computer.
69. A method of playing a live game comprising :
 (A) giving a player an option to place a prize wager;

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(B) playing an underlying live game, the underlying live
 game being capable of producing a predetermined event;
 and
 (C) if the predetermined event occurs and the player
 5 placed the prize wager, then:
 (a) recording a random number;
 (b) selecting a prize from a predetermined pay table by
 comparing the random number to the pay table, the pay
 table having a list of predetermined distinct prizes
 10 corresponding to a range of possible random numbers;
 and
 (c) awarding the prize to the player, whereby the
 underlying live game may be enhanced by allowing the
 player to win a randomly selected prize in the playing of
 15 the underlying live game.

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70. The method of claim 69 wherein generating a
 random number comprises the following steps:
 (A) producing random numbers consecutively in a
 continuous manner; and
 20 (B) recording one random number when the
 predetermined event occurs, whereby the recorded
 random number is used in selecting the prize.
 71. The method of claim 69 wherein a value of the prize
 is independent of a probability of occurrence of the
 predefined event.
 72. The method of claim 69, wherein a value of the prize
 is independent of success in the underlying game.